

HISTSCI-3004A: Teaching Colloquium

Fall 2023

Every other Tuesday, 3-4:30pm,

Canvas Website: <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/95834>

Teaching Staff

Course Description

This class is designed for new teachers in the Department of the History of science, as a forum for the discussion of effective teaching strategies. Its purpose is to provide information on designing instruction, practice teaching, and exchange tips for a successful instruction experience for both the TF's and their students. It also is meant to provide an opportunity for TF's to reflect on their pedagogy and teaching philosophy. The success of this course depends in large part on the active engagement of all participants.

Objectives

- To provide support and resources for new and returning TF's in the History of Science department
- To encourage TF's to think critically and reflectively about their teaching
- To ensure institutional knowledge continuity in the department
- To enable TF's to build a teaching portfolio including teaching philosophy and syllabus design workshops
- To Familiarize TF's with the resources available at the Bok Center and other offices at Harvard.

Requirements

- Attendance and participation in all course meetings
- Short readings/assignments as announced throughout the semester.
- A classroom observation chosen from the following options (can be completed in Spring):
 - Observation by PF and a discussion with them afterwards
 - A videotaping of one class/section with the PF or another member of the Bok Center.

Grading

Grading for this course is satisfactory/unsatisfactory (SAT/UNS)

Pre-semester:

Please register and attend the Fall Teaching Conference at the Bok Center

Schedule of topics

Each session will begin with a troubleshooting forum/ reflection on teaching that week, ~15 min and then followed by discussion of the topic of the week ~60 min.

1st week (or the Annual Bootcamp): Planning and Teaching Your First Section

We will discuss how to navigate the first day of class. Topics will include how to set clear expectations in the classroom, roles, and responsibilities as Teaching Fellow and where to seek support. Finally, we will spend some time discussing strategies for balancing research and teaching.

Readings:

- Huston, Therese. Chapter 3: "Getting Ready" in *Teaching What You Don't Know*. Harvard University Press, 2009
- <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/inclusive-moves>

2nd week: How to Structure and Frame Section Meetings

The purpose of this session is to examine elements of a section meeting. We will discuss how to set section goals, what the role of the section meeting is, how to outline learning objectives for the class meeting, and how to devise a Lesson Plan that considers what students need to learn and how to execute effectively during the class time.

Pework:

- Have a list of deadlines, conferences, travel, and any other commitments you plan to undertake during the fall semester.
- a pre-semester checklist to prepare for section ([link](#))
- Come prepared with a list of three goals for the first day of your section, as well as ways you might achieve those goals.

Reading:

Linda Nilson, "Establishing a Positive Learning Community" in *Teaching at its Best* (5th edition; John Wiley and Sons, 2023) p. 89-98

During the week

Organize Microteaching sessions for new TF's.

- Prepare a short (5 minutes) lesson that covers one idea you want to teach in your current course. Each TF will present their lesson and receive feedback from their peers.

3rd Week: Facilitating Section Discussion and Engagement

This session will focus on section structuring including planning section discussions, facilitating discussion and engagement, responding to students in section and Active Learning Techniques. We will make sure to cover topics such as navigating difficult conversations in the classroom, and tips on making classroom discussion more active.

Reading:

Nilson, "Leading Effective Discussions," in *Teaching at its Best* (John Wiley and Sons, 2010), 127-136.

Pre-work

Spend time with the ABL Connect website (<https://ablconnect.harvard.edu/>), Pick one or two class exercises you might incorporate in your class.

4th week: Grading and Responding to Student Writing

In this session we will discuss strategies for fair and effective assessment of student's works. We will focus on effective feedback and how rubrics can help in the process of grading and clear success criteria can enhance the grading process.

Pework

- Watch: "Thanks for the Feedback by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen - A Visual Summary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTkxwkCJA-E>
- please grade and provide feedback on the short paper that was emailed. We will discuss the different strategies and criteria employed in grading during this session,

Additional Activity:

Midterm Student Feedback: for this exercise, you will distribute an anonymous midterm feedback form to your students once you receive their midterm feedback forms, schedule a meeting with the PF to review and discuss the responses together.

5th Week: Fostering an Equitable and Inclusive Classroom

In this session we will discuss how we can ensure equitable opportunities for learning for all our students. We will be on sharing and reflecting concrete strategies for inclusive teaching. We will also discuss how to navigate difficult moments in the classroom.

Pework:

Download and read through "A Comprehensive checklist of inclusive teaching practices".

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UK3HFQv-3qMDNjvt0fFPbts38ApOL7ghpPE0iSYJ1Z8/edit#heading=h.jp4aqiglg05>

6th Week: Student support and resources – Recommendation letters

What can we do when students are struggling in the classroom? In this session we will host – to give us an overview of the undergraduate advising structure at Harvard and what resources are out there to help students facing a wide range of challenges. We will also discuss strategies for writing Recommendation letters for students.

Additional Activity:

Teaching observation:

"Classroom Observation" and "Video Consultations" are available. This is a great way to receive feedback and an opportunity to reflect on our teaching practices in the classroom.

There are two ways you can receive feedback :

1. Classroom Observations
2. Video Consultation

You can find out more about these services through this link. This is where you can also sign up for them. <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/class-observations-grad>

Both services are not an evaluation. Instead, think of them as an exercise that is meant to help you and one that enables you to have a conversation on teaching. The feedback will be shared only with you.